

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5 to 17, 20 and 21 are pending in the application, of which claims 1, 17 and 20 are independent.¹ Favorable reconsideration and further examination are requested.

In the Office Action, claims 5, 6 and 12 were rejected under the second paragraph of §112 for the reasons noted on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action. As shown above, the claims have been amended to address these rejections. In view of these amendments, withdrawal of the §112, second paragraph, rejections of the above claims is respectfully requested.

Next, we thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 1, 7 to 11, and 13 to 16 are allowable, and for the indication that claim 19 contains allowable subject matter. As shown above, the subject matter of claim 19, and intervening claim 18, has been incorporated into independent claims 17 and 20. Claims 17 and 20 are therefore also believed to be allowable.

There being no other issues, we submit that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this

¹ The Examiner is urged to confirm this recitation of the pending claims.

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paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

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Please apply any charges or credits not otherwise covered to deposit account no. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

May 5, 2008

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